

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A communications terminal apparatus, comprising:
a communications mechanism configured to perform
5 communications with a plurality of communications machines
including a sending communications machine and a transfer
communications machine;
a registering mechanism configured to register an
address and a communications capability of said transfer
10 communications machine;
a notifying mechanism configured to notify of said
communications capability of said transfer communications
machine registered in said registering mechanism; and
a controlling mechanism configured to instruct said
15 notifying mechanism to notify said sending communications
machine of said communications capability at a beginning of
communications and to instruct said communications mechanism
to transfer image information received from said sending
communications machine to said transfer communications
20 machine using said address stored in said registering
mechanism.

2. A communications terminal apparatus, comprising:
a communications mechanism configured to perform
25 communications with a plurality of communications machines

including a sending communications machine and a transfer communications machine;

a registering mechanism configured to register an address and a communications capability of said transfer
5 communications machine;

a memory storing a set of image parameters;

a notifying mechanism configured to notify of an enhancement communications capability of said apparatus in accordance with said communications capability of said
10 transfer communications machine; and

a controlling mechanism configured to instruct said notifying mechanism to notify said sending communications machine of said enhancement communications capability at a beginning of communications and to instruct said
15 communications mechanism to transfer image information received from said sending communications machine to said transfer communications machine using said address and said set of image parameters stored in said memory.

20 3. An apparatus as defined in Claim 2, wherein said image information includes color and/or mono-color gray-scale data.

4. An apparatus as defined in Claim 3, further
25 comprising an enabling mechanism for enabling a color image

receiving function when said address and said communications capability of said transfer communications machine are registered in said registering mechanism.

5 5. An apparatus as defined in Claim 2, wherein said controlling mechanism is configured to instruct said communications mechanism to communicate with said transfer communications machine to obtain said communications capability of said transfer communications machine when said
10 communications capability of said transfer communications machine is registered in said registering mechanism.

 6. An apparatus as defined in Claim 2, further comprising another communications mechanism configured to
15 perform communications with a plurality of communications machines including a sending communications machine and a transfer communications machine,

 wherein said apparatus separately uses said communications mechanisms for receiving and transferring, and
20 wherein said controlling mechanism changes communications protocols for a transferring operation and accordingly converts said image parameters stored in said memory.

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7. An apparatus as defined in Claim 6, wherein said
controlling mechanism is configured to start to transfer said
image information received from said sending communications
machine to said transfer communications machine before a
5 completion of receiving said image information from said
sending communications machine.

8. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said
controlling mechanism is configured to obtain a latest
10 communications capability through said communications
mechanism when transferring said image information and to
update said registration mechanism with said latest
communications capability.

9. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said
controlling mechanism is configured to obtain a latest
communications capability through said communications
mechanism at intervals of a predetermined time period and to
update said registration mechanism with said latest
15 communications capability.

10. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said
controlling mechanism is configured to detect at the
beginning of said communications that said image information
25 is sent and to conduct a call initiation to said transfer

communications machine when detecting that said image information is sent.

11. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said
5 controlling mechanism is configured to detect that said transfer communications machine is busy and to then stop receiving said image information from said sending communications machine.

10 12. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said controlling mechanism is configured to transfer said image information to another registered transfer communications machine upon a detection of an event indicating that said transfer communications machine is busy.

15 13. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said controlling mechanism is configured to perform a retry call to said transfer communications machine upon a detection of an event indicating that said transfer communications machine
20 is busy.

14. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said controlling mechanism is configured to perform a retry call at intervals of a predetermined time period to said transfer
25 communications machine upon a detection of an event

indicating that said transfer communications machine is busy.

15. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said
controlling mechanism is configured to transfer said image
5 information in page units.

16. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said
controlling mechanism is configured to transfer said image
information using a type of communications same as that used
10 to receive said image information with said communications
mechanism.

17. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said
controlling mechanism is configured to transfer said image
15 information through E-mail to said transfer communications
machine.

18. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said
controlling mechanism is configured to detect that said
20 transfer communications machine is incapable of receiving
said image information and to then stop receiving said image
information from said sending communications machine.

19. An apparatus as defined in Claim 8, wherein said
25 controlling mechanism is configured to determine whether said

latest communications capability is sufficient to receive
said image information and stops receiving said image
information from said sending communications machine when
said latest communications capability is determined as not
5 sufficient to receive said image information.

20. An apparatus as defined in Claim 17, wherein said
controlling mechanism is configured to add a literal
identification of said image information to said E-mail.

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21. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said
controlling mechanism is configured to transfer said image
information with a predetermined identification code causing
said transfer communications machine to reproduce an output
15 of said image information into a predetermined recording
sheet tray corresponding to said predetermined identification
code.

22. An apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein said
20 controlling mechanism is configured to determine whether an
own communications capability can accept said image
information and to transfer said image information to said
transfer communications machine when said own communications
capability of said apparatus cannot accept said image
25 information.

23. A communications terminal apparatus, comprising:
communicating means for performing communications with
a plurality of communications machines including a sending
communications machine and a transfer communications machine;
5 registering means for registering an address and a
communications capability of said transfer communications
machine;
notifying means for notifying of said communications
capability of said transfer communications machine registered
10 in said registering means; and
controlling means for instructing said notifying means
to notify said sending communications machine of said
communications capability at a beginning of communications
and instructing said communications means to transfer image
15 information received from said sending communications machine
to said transfer communications machine using said address
stored in said registering means.

24. A communications terminal apparatus, comprising:
20 communicating means for performing communications with
a plurality of communications machines including a sending
communications machine and a transfer communications machine;
registering means for registering an address and a
communications capability of said transfer communications
25 machine;

storing means for storing and a set of image
parameters;

notifying means for notifying of an enhancement
communications capability of said apparatus in accordance
5 with said communications capability of said transfer
communications machine; and

controlling means for instructing said notifying means
to notify said sending communications machine of said
enhancement communications capability at a beginning of
10 communications and instructing said communications means to
transfer image information received from said sending
communications machine to said transfer communications
machine using said address and said set of image parameters
stored in said storing means.

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25. An apparatus as defined in Claim 24, wherein said
image information includes color or mono-color gray-scale
data.

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26. An apparatus as defined in Claim 25, further
comprising enabling means for enabling a color image
receiving function when said address and said communications
capability of said transfer communications machine are
registered in said registering means.

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27. An apparatus as defined in Claim 24, wherein said
controlling means comprises means to instruct said
communications means to communicate with said transfer
communications machine to obtain said communications
5 capability of said transfer communications machine when said
communications capability of said transfer communications
machine is registered in said registering means.

28. An apparatus as defined in Claim 24, further
10 comprising another communications means configured to perform
communications with a plurality of communications machines
including a sending communications machine and a transfer
communications machine,

wherein said apparatus separately uses said
15 communications means for receiving and transferring, and
wherein said controlling means changes communications
protocols for a transferring operation and accordingly
converts said image parameters stored in said storing means.

29. An apparatus as defined in Claim 28, wherein said
20 controlling means includes means to start to transfer said
image information received from said sending communications
machine to said transfer communications machine before a
completion of receiving said image information from said
25 sending communications machine.

30. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
controlling means includes means to obtain a latest
communications capability through said communications means
5 when transferring said image information and to update said
registration means with said latest communications
capability.

31. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
10 controlling means includes means to obtain a latest
communications capability through said communications means
at intervals of a predetermined time period and to update
said registration means with said latest communications
capability.

15 32. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
controlling means includes means to detect at the beginning
of said communications that said image information is sent
and to conduct a call initiation to said transfer
20 communications machine when detecting that said image
information is sent.

33. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
controlling means includes means to detect that said transfer
25 communications machine is busy and to then stop receiving

said image information from said sending communications machine.

34. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
5 controlling means includes means to transfer said image
information to another registered transfer communications
machine upon a detection of an event indicating that said
transfer communications machine is busy.

10 35. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
controlling means includes means to perform a retry call to
said transfer communications machine upon a detection of an
event indicating that said transfer communications machine is
busy.

15 36. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
controlling means includes means to perform a retry call at
intervals of a predetermined time period to said transfer
communications machine upon a detection of an event
20 indicating that said transfer communications machine is busy.

37. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
controlling means includes means to transfer said image
information in page units.

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38. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
controlling means includes means to transfer said image
information using a type of communications same as that used
to receive said image information with said communications
5 means.

39. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
controlling means includes means to transfer said image
information through E-mail to said transfer communications
10 machine.

40. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said
controlling means includes means to detect that said transfer
communications machine is incapable of receiving said image
15 information and to then stop receiving said image information
from said sending communications machine.

41. An apparatus as defined in Claim 30, wherein said
controlling means includes means to determine whether said
20 latest communications capability is sufficient to receive
said image information and to stop receiving said image
information from said sending communications machine when
said latest communications capability is determined as not
sufficient to receive said image information.

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42. An apparatus as defined in Claim 39, wherein said controlling means includes means to add a literal identification of said image information to said E-mail.

5 43. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said controlling means includes means to transfer said image information with a predetermined identification code to cause said transfer communications machine to reproduce an output of said image information into a predetermined recording
10 sheet tray corresponding to said predetermined identification code.

44. An apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said controlling means includes means to determine whether an own
15 communications capability can accept said image information and to transfer said image information to said transfer communications machine when said own communications capability of said apparatus cannot accept said image information.

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45. A method of transferring image information, comprising the steps of:

registering an address and a communications capability of a transfer communications machine;

25 notifying a sending communications machine of said

communications capability of said transfer communications machine at a beginning of communications;

receiving image information from said sending communications machine; and

5 transferring said image information received from said sending communications machine to said transfer communications machine using said address of said transfer communications machine.

10 46. A method of transferring image information, comprising the steps of:

registering an address and a communications capability of a transfer communications machine;

storing a set of image parameters;

15 notifying of an enhancement communications capability in accordance with said communications capability of said transfer communications machine at a beginning of communications;

receiving image information from a sending communications machine; and

20 transferring said image information received from said sending communications machine to said transfer communications machine using said address and said set of image parameters stored in said storing step.

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47. A method as defined in Claim 46, wherein said image information includes color or mono-color gray-scale data.

5 48. A method as defined in Claim 47, further comprising a step of enabling for enabling a color image receiving function when said registering step registers said address and said communications capability of said transfer communications machine.

10 49. A method as defined in Claim 46, further comprising a step of communicating for communicating with said transfer communications machine to obtain said communications capability of said transfer communications
15 machine when said registering step registers said communications capability of said transfer communications machine.

20 50. A method as defined in Claim 46, wherein said transferring step uses a communications line and communications protocols different from those used for said receiving step with different image parameters converted from said image parameters stored in said storing step.

25 51. A method as defined in Claim 50, wherein said

transferring step starts to transfer said image information before a completion of receiving said image information from said sending communications machine.

5 52. A method as defined in Claim 51, wherein said transferring step obtains a latest communications capability from said transfer communications machine when transferring said image information and updates said latest communications capability registered in said registering step.

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53. A method as defined in Claim 51, wherein said transferring step obtains a latest communications capability from said transfer communications machine at intervals of a predetermined time period and updates said latest

15 communications capability registered in said registering step.

54. A method as defined in Claim 51, further comprising a step of detecting for detecting at the beginning
20 of said communications that said image information is sent, and wherein said transferring step sends a call initiation to said transfer communications machine when said detecting step detects that said image information is sent.

25 55. A method as defined in Claim 51, further

comprising a detecting step for detecting that said transfer communications machine is busy, and wherein said receiving step stops receiving when said detecting step detects that said transfer communications machine is busy.

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56. A method as defined in Claim 51, wherein said transferring step transfers said image information to another registered transfer communications machine upon a detection of an event indicating that said transfer communications machine is busy.

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57. A method as defined in Claim 51, wherein said transferring step performs a retry call to said transfer communications machine upon a detection of an event indicating that said transfer communications machine is busy.

58. A method as defined in Claim 51, wherein said transferring step performs a retry call at intervals of a predetermined time period to said transfer communications machine upon a detection of an event indicating that said transfer communications machine is busy.

59. A method as defined in Claim 51, wherein said transferring step transfers said image information in page units.

60. A method as defined in Claim 51, wherein said transferring step transfers said image information using a type of communications same as that used by said receiving step.

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61. A method as defined in Claim 51, wherein said transferring step transfers said image information through E-mail to said transfer communications machine.

62. A method as defined in Claim 51, further comprising a detecting step for detecting that said transfer communications machine is incapable of receiving said image information, and wherein said receiving step stops receiving when said detecting step detects that said transfer
10 communications machine is incapable of receiving said image
15 information.

63. A method as defined in Claim 52, further comprising a determining step for determining whether said
20 latest communications capability is sufficient to receive said image information, and wherein said receiving step stops receiving when said determining step determines said latest communications capability is not sufficient to receive said image information.

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64. A method as defined in Claim 61, further comprising an adding step for adding a literal identification of said image information to said E-mail.

5 65. A method as defined in Claim 51, wherein said transferring step transfers said image information with a predetermined identification code to cause said transfer communications machine to reproduce an output of said image information into a predetermined recording sheet tray
10 corresponding to said predetermined identification code.

66. A method as defined in Claim 51, further comprising a determining step for determining whether an own communications capability can accept said image information,
15 and wherein said transferring step transfers said image information to said transfer communications machine when said determining step determines that said own communications capability of said apparatus cannot accept said image information.

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67. A method comprising:
receiving a fax transmission at a receiving fax machine
checking through an automated process if the fax
transmission contains color image information; and
25 if said checking determines that the fax transmission

contains color image information, transferring at
least the color image information, though an
automated process, from the receiving fax machine
to a transfer fax machine that has color printing
capabilities for printing of said color image
5 information.

68. A method as in claim 67 in which said
transferring is by fax transmission from the receiving fax
10 machine to the transfer fax machine.

69. A method as in claim 67 in which said
transferring is by e-mail transmission.

70. A method as in claim 67 in which said checking
15 comprises analyzing an initial portion of the fax
transmission to see if a subsequent portion of the fax
transmission contains color image information.

71. A method as in claim 67 in which said
20 transferring includes generating contact information
identifying said transfer fax machine on the basis of
information stored at said receiving fax machine before said
fax transmission.

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72. A method as in claim 71 in which said generating of contact information includes selecting said transfer fax machine from a plurality of fax machines for which contact information has been stored at the receiving fax machine.

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73. A method as in claim 67 including concurrently receiving said fax transmission at the receiving fax machine and transferring said fax transmission from the receiving to the transfer fax machine.

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74. A method as in claim 67 including storing, at said receiving fax machine, contact information regarding one or more transfer fax machines that have color printing capabilities and updating said contact information from time to time through an automated process.

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75. A method as in claim 74 in which said contact information comprises information regarding color information processing capabilities of said one or more transfer fax machines.

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76. A method as in claim 74 in which said transferring includes selecting through an automated process one of several transfer fax machines for which contact information is stored in the receiving fax machine,

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determining if the so selected transfer fax machine is available and, if it not, selecting another, available transfer machine from among those for which contact information is stored at the receiving fax machine.

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77. A method as in claim 76 in which the stored contact information includes information regarding color information handling capabilities or said one or more transfer fax machines and said selecting includes taking into
10 account, through automated process, a relationship between said fax transmission and said color information processing capabilities.

78. A method as in claim 67 in which said
15 transferring includes adding, by the receiving fax machine, a subject line to the transferred fax transmission.

79. A method as in claim 67 in which said transferring includes adding, by the receiving fax machine, a
20 code to the transferred fax transmission designating a manner of handling prints of the transferred fax transmission at the transfer fax machine.

80. A method as in claim 67 in which said checking
25 comprises checking if the fax transmission includes color

